not be good. This extremely unpleasant prescription, in conjunction with the expensive medicine, stands in the way of a greater distribution of smelting enterprises. Even in places where a hut for iron smelting is already in existence, people prefer to buy iron from others if their own has been a failure several times, for this misfortune is attributed to the failure of the fire as a result of the sexual /226/ impurity of one or a number of the participants. The importation of European iron in recent years is dealing a death blow to the native industry. The fear of bringing anything impure (and all sexual matters are pre-eminently regarded as such) into contact with pure fire goes so far that a medicine is made by those participants whose wives menstruate during the smelting. This consists of a diamond-shape piece cut out of the bark on the supporting beam of the smelting hut on the side facing the furnace, and it is supposed to represent the female sex organ. The symbol is rubbed with redwood which has been pulverized by the woman concerned and represents her blood flow; it is covered with a leaf of the Myrianthus arboreus P.B. (mangême III Fang) to indicate that one wants everything impure to be hidden and therefore harmless. At the same time the plant is supposed to cause the iron to coalesce to the same degree as the individual fruits are united in a syncarp. In Plate 17 one can see a piece of the leaf on the supporting post (top left), as well as (somewhat lower down) a bark container which holds fragments of ancestors' skulls, a number of antelopes' horns, and a great variety of other medicines that are used later. That the people concerned with the ancestor cult are regarded as particularly suited to bring the work to a successful conclusion is apparent from the fact that they alone may tend the fire (see Fig. 183).

The smelting of iron is thus above all under the aegis of the fire cult, but it is also closely linked with the worship of the ancestors who contribute to the success of the enterprise insofar as it lies in their power to do so.

Iron crops out in the form of brown iron ore (ngi IV) (1) and is

1. The analysis carried out by Mr. Du Bois at the suggestion of Professor Pufahl (Königliche Bergakademie in Berlin)

general
for the rest,
value since such
about without

conceptual ability of the natives; 532
however, it has no ethnographic
a creation would never have come
external influence.

C. Plastic arts.

rooted in religion
the conceptual
great cults.

The plastic arts are still wholly 533 769
and hence derive their motifs from
realm of ancestor worship and of the

The ancestral
or full figures
a recurrent lack
superficiality of
to me to reflect a

figures are heads carved out of wood
in the African style, that is, with
of expression which, despite all the
the given forms, nonetheless seems
certain amiable naiveté and a quiet

Fig. 227
Top of a Chief's Stick with a Human Figure.

humor. To be sure, this effect hardly makes itself felt in the cold museum cases, but it does so in the native environment, especially when the natives carry the figures about at their cult festivals and make them dance. At any rate, the figures never bear the distorted, animalistic traits that distinguish Papuan art.

The large figures associated with celebrations for the ancestors are striking exceptions among the ordinary ancestral figures which are carved out of a single piece of wood. These large figures have attached arms which are slightly movable, legs, and sex organs.

In the same category as the ancestral figures we should place 532
the following which probably have a primarily religious significance: human figures at the ends of a number of chief's sticks (F.g. 227); furthermore, human heads on the center pillars and on the posts of the benches in the meeting houses, on the harps, and on the box musical pipe. On the other hand, the carving on the memory game is probably purely secular; at one end this carving forms a head. The same applies perhaps to the animal

777 conceptions developed in connection with the veneration of
751 ancestors, concerning the influence of the ancestors, who live where Nsambe does, on the terrestrial well-being of their
754 descendants. The most important of the medicines for wealth,
777 atum or aseb, that is, the Mekuk medicine, is based on the ideas of sorcery which I discussed in the previous section /Ed., not translated/. The skulls needed for the ancestor cult are not in
● [149] this case those from relatives who died a natural death, but from those who were murdered secretly by sorcery (poisoning). Each bi̱i̱ akū̱'ma, therefore, is a nə̄m, a sin. The murder victims,
[824] or rather their souls, are called mekɨ̄k (1). A person who keeps

1. Etymologically related to ákɨ́k, "upper part of the body." Perhaps we have here an intentional circumlocution, because the Pangwe like to avoid the real designation for their mesə̄m (sins).

the skulls in order to acquire wealth is called e mə̄də a bi̱i̱ mekɨ̄k (= e mə̄də a n'a mekɨ̄k), that is, the man who has the Mekuk. I have known a Mekuk man who had no less than ten skulls of his murdered relatives in his house. In addition, the Mekuk man possesses magical devices which he sells on request together with the skulls in exchange for an excessive payment from people who themselves want to become Mekuk men. The latter are of course only sorcerers, that is, people who -- as was said in Section 12 /Ed., not translated/ -- receive the power to practice sorcery in their youth through a medicine, but who perhaps until then had not yet used their power and now want to train themselves in the specialized field of Mekuk medicine. For this purpose, their teacher demands that they murder a close relative, usually a father or mother, and bring him the skull. He himself will give them in exchange an older /150/ skull from his own collection and in addition frequently the back bones. The first
[608] skull of a Mekuk collection is therefore one of a stranger and has already been effective as a medicine. It is not an actual ancestral

It is not the bark container known to us from Malan that is used to keep the Mekuk skulls, but rather a chamber dug under the floor of the house (Fig. 53). I saw a bark box used only once, placed on tall props reaching almost to the roof. The chest is divided into two sections by means of a dip in the bottom, and it is carefully leveled and smeared with red wood (hence, the name atum from atom, "section, /151/ /Fig. 53 appears here in the original text/ room," which refers to the entire medicine). It is covered up by a piece of bark and a thin layer of dirt and thus remains hidden from strangers' eyes. Frequently a chest is placed over it also, or the little underground chamber is located under a bed. On the step-like raised part the medicines (b) are kept inside a circle made of plantain pieces (a). These medicines include nkil, above all, and furthermore bark scraped off the Penniaceae [211] Opiocaulon cinamopeloides Hook f. and Adenia lobata (Jacq.) Engl. (undhodile a ndili) (1), leaves of evodime or ayoba-beyo

1. Also used as fish poison (see Vol. I. p. 83).

important because of the nodules in the leaves which make them look perforated like the ewu of a dead magician, and other things. Below the step the skulls (c) are set up in a semicircle so that they face the medicine.

[214] The skulls are cared for in a manner similar to the customary manner of treating the Malan skulls. Unlike the latter, they are not served food every day, but nevertheless frequently; sometimes chickens are slaughtered for them, and they are bathed in chicken blood and have chicken meat set before them.

[215] This medicine, which is unknown in the northern region (Jaunde), is quite widespread among the Fang and is the subject of many tales and stories which make all light men /Ed., men with light skin color?/ break out in a cold sweat. My boys were so excited by the [216] stories that they maintained they could not sleep if they kept thinking of these hideous Mekuk. Thus it is told, among other things, that the Mekuk walk up and down in their little room at night and make a hullabaloo or even come out of their room and thrash

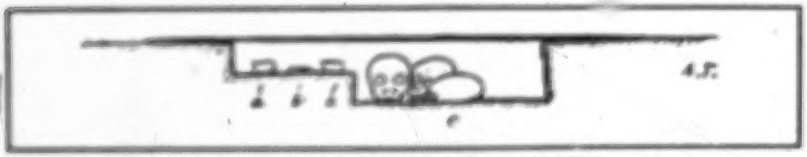


Fig. 53. Underground Chamber of a Mekuk Sorcerer, Cross-section.
(a) Circle made of plantain pieces, (b) magic medicines, (c) skulls of murdered relatives.

the Mekuk man's house companions in their sleep, so that they wake up the next day completely beaten up. They are also supposed to steal money and goods in order to take them to the Mekuk man. In short, the Mekuk stories remind one of the experiences of the man who wanted to learn to be afraid /Ed., in one of Grimm's fairy tales/.

Other medicines for wealth that utilize the power of the souls are more innocent; they do not require the murder of relatives nor care of the skulls. Instead, their powers are derived from the habitation of the souls, the Copaifera tessmannii Harms (ovoo). The Mekuk skulls must be included only in the event the medicine man already possesses some. The procedure as a rule is as follows. The father of the person concerned goes with a medicine man, /152/ and both clear an area under a large Copaifera. Then a leaf vessel filled with water is set up, and into this some of the bark of the Copaifera is scraped nine times (three times three); furthermore a stone from the stomach of the crocodile is placed in it if one is available. A peculiar test of the worthiness of the young man is now given. Various objects are placed together in three piles: on the first are placed steamed cassava (women's food) and a basket (ebâ'dâ) carried only by old women because it has a small capacity; on the second, a rifle, a bundle of vegetables (ngon) with fish, brass ornaments, cowrie shells, and a piece of cloth, all of which are things that delight young people; on the third pile is placed a fly swatter (implement of the chiefs), a foot ring made of ivory, and a boiled chicken, in other words, such things as are allotted to chiefs. Now the young man is brought to the piles. "If he has sense," he will go to the last pile and consume the chicken. In this

832 fumigated (Fig. 58), while the skulls with cold severity surveyed the situation, until they themselves had justice done to them, for they were carried in a dance around the love tree. Meanwhile, a number of the participants took red dye and with it drew a line on the bark of the love tree, observing that they themselves would like to look like this in the eyes of their beloved. Another one took black dye in addition to the red and first made a red line, saying, "In the eyes of the girl to which I shall go (he probably was not allowed to pronounce her name) I want to appear like this (red)"; then he drew a black line and added, "On the other hand, the girl shall see all others like this (black line)." We already know that red is the color of life, [822] of joy, and of light. Black here signifies its opposite, the unpleasant and ugly.

832 Finally, a small punishment was meted out to the ancestral skulls by sticking them in the above-mentioned draw traps set 769 up around the tree and leaving them there until the next day. Such a punishment of the ancestors is very rare, and it is significant that it does not occur at the Malan but in connection with the love medicine, which is to be regarded as a degenerate form of the Malan. Then around the tree a great variety of other medicines were distributed, such as red dye and a piece from the loincloth of a mother-in-law. Among the Fang the genitals [826] themselves are supposed to be taken, these having been cut from the deceased mother-in-law. /162/ /Fig. 58 appears here in the original text/

832 On the forenoon of the second day of the festival about 25 783 banana leaf vessels were set up in a row in the festive area and [415] filled with freshly fetched water. Into the first vessel the medicine man put a whole pile of bark pieces and leaves, all of them love medicines. The other vessels were treated in a more perfunctory fashion: only a few pieces of bark were placed in the second vessel, and in each of the following, only one; the last vessels did not get anything. The medicine man then sat down at the first vessel, blew into it with a pipe, whereupon a thick, [348] soap-like foam arose, which supposedly comes from the bark of [824] the Cylicodiscus gabunensis (Taub) Harms (edûm), and then washed his face, first in this vessel and then in all the following

769 The veneration of skulls likewise occurs in the case of the
224 hunting medicines. The skull of a man killed by violent means,
826 whose corpse remained on the spot (if the man belongs to the same kinship group), is kept in a bark box and taken care of as in ancestor worship. When a huntsman kills a wild animal, for example, he takes the first piece that falls to him in the distribution of the meat to the skull as a thanks offering. This piece consists of the sex organs and the flesh around them (ekĭ)ă', see Fig. 92 in Vol. I). After he has taken it to the skull, he carries it off again
[262] to eat it himself. On the other hand, if there has been no luck on the hunt, a chicken is killed for the "man" in the box so he will see to it that a wild animal soon appears in front of his protégé's rifle and will be hit as effectively as he was in his time.

721 In addition, the Fang have a great war medicine, a celebra-
789 tion which is called aŋgŭŋgu and is a companion festivity to the engongeschok. On this occasion, a sacred place is set up, a subterranean corridor similar to that described in the case of the Ngi /Ed., not translated/ is dug, and a dwarf antelope, Cephalophus
[825] melanorheus Gray (ogbwŭ́n), which must have been caught alive, is brought to the place. Then the medicine man stations himself at one end of the corridor, and all the other men, armed with rifles,
[824] hang a seed of the Sorindeia rubriflora Engl. (afá'ne[k]) as medicine around their necks, and crawl -- the first with the antelope in his arms -- through the corridor. At the exit, the medicine man gives all of them, including the antelope, a medicine. The antelope is thereupon released, and it is believed that when a surprise attack is planned and the enemy has got wind of it, the animal will appear and thereby warn the attackers. By way of medicines to secure the /167/ necessary courage for such an attack, five different ones are available.

777 The medicines for trapping and fishing are rarer than the shot
226 medicines, a sign that these occupations are more in the Pangwe's
224 blood than open hunting. I have taken down only eight plants for fish medicines and twelve for trap medicines.

opinion of one Fang, the word a bíńĺn, which is contained in the name abíń, has the sense of "moving about and rumbling," and they want the stormy weather just to move about and rumble.

The help of the ancestors is employed in another method of combatting Jupiter Pluvius, one that is used chiefly for cult-festivities. The ancestral figures, festively smeared with oil and red wood, are placed in front of the house where they would be drenched "to the skin" if they did not see to it that no rain fell on this particular day. At the same time the ancestral skulls are frequently painted with a salve made of red wood and ground bark of Pentaclethra macrophylla, whose pods, when they are ripe, burst open with a pop and fling the fruit a great distance; in this way the natives indicate that the rain should be flung to one side in the same fashion.

When women are in the fields harvesting -- especially at the harvest of ngon -- and rain threatens, they put a little water and a stone in a leaf bundle and hang this up in the field. In the same manner the rain is supposed to remain suspended in the sky, be as heavy as the stone, and stay in its place just like a Negro whose "heart is heavy" and who shows no inclination for any kind of undertaking.

Medicines with a similar effect are used on journeys. A leaf of Trachyphrynium violaceum Radl. (tsĕdzĕkĭĭ, IV Fang) is twisted into a bag, filled with a little water, and then fastened to one finger. By doing this, the rain is held fast. Another medicine consists of hanging up old pieces of wood saturated with water, so that the rain will likewise be absorbed up in the sky. Furthermore, a person will take a Petersia twig or a fern leaf dipped in water in his hand, /199/ so that the rain will be broken up into as many little parts as the small pinnules of the fern. Finally, there is the familiar Selaginella, the herb of "missing" (nĕ)ănĕ, from á nĕĺn, "to miss"), that is to say, the rain is supposed to miss man.

It should be emphasized that the Pangwe no longer regard these medicines seriously and even ridicule them as "superstition"; they have long since noticed that none of them helps. Hence, medicines against rain are no longer used today, except as a joke. A possible exception may be the cooking pot medicine of the women,

578 publicly, as in the case of the paternal curse, or in the field
595 when the women are among themselves. /293/

A droll effect is created when the souls are cursed by their
769 descendants. The curse is pronounced at the ancestral feast if it
578 is believed that the souls of the ancestors no longer care about the living, and the curse is also revoked on the same occasion. Although, as ancestors, the souls were more elevated persons who actually cannot be cursed, here is another instance where might comes before right, for after death the souls are powerless on earth, as we know.

578 Finally, there is a belief in secret curses, and thus, if people are constantly unlucky in life, they are sometimes afraid that they are being cursed by this or that person.

The most terrible curse is that which was pronounced by Nsambe (God) upon human beings when they committed the first major offense against his paternal will. As described in Volume II, page 59 /Ed., not translated/, the curse is symbolically erased during the cult celebration.

3. Children's Games (1)

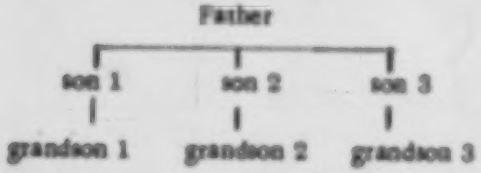
524 [113] 1. See G. Tessmann, "Die Kinderspiele der Pangwe" /The Children's Games of the Pangwe/, in the Baessler-Archiv, Vol. 2, No. 5-6, p. 250. The children's games are discussed there in detail.

I divide children's games into two major classes: the generally imitative games, and the independent games. Of the former I distinguish three groups: first, gymnastic games which imitate the movements of adults (running, sport, and dancing); second, war and hunting games which imitate the main occupations, not to say professions, of adults; and third, all the rest of the imitative games. The independent games, which are on a higher level, I divide again into three groups: first, toy games, that is, games that are played with objects and do not imitate any

where they enjoy great esteem and are consulted every time on decisions concerning all the family, [91] such as the marriage of a child, because this is a matter of alliance with another tribe, or such as moving the village. Young people of a poor family who get themselves adopted may be incorporated into the family and assimilated among its children. The adopted son (mobi) gets a wife from the head of the family which has taken him in. This wife, however, is only loaned to him, and the children whom he may have do not belong to him and are regarded as being of the adopter's family whose name they receive.

Each family has a fetish all its own, which is handed down through the oldest sons. It is often a reed (ayen) which is planted behind the huts of the village where the family lives, by a practitioner in the course of an important ceremony. The practitioner digs a hole, puts into it the bones of a member of the family killed by the bivur, spits onto it some wild pepper that he has chewed, and, before planting the reed, says, "be nzue, be wone, me nga non we bemvama e dzam ese dzah bor yôi, o be sile e yenege" (without stealing or hiding myself I have taken from my ancestors, so that everything which will be asked of you by this family shall happen). The reed must be treasured and constantly kept clear of weeds which might grow around it. A fowl is sacrificed to this reed by the head of the family every time he wishes to undertake an important matter, and when the village moves the plant is taken along with the bones and replanted.

Social Life. Pahouin society is limited to a group of families which make up the tribe. The latter originates from a single family, the sons of which have left to establish other families in their turn. The separation occurs almost constantly in the third generation. The formation of a tribe may be diagrammed thus:



Grandson 1 establishes a family which keeps the name of the founder; grandson 2, a family which will take the name of this grandson; and

the social and cultural organizations are directly blamed: the breaking up and dispersal of the groupings resulting in the rupture of fundamental interdictions (especially that of exogamy: with the present confusion each man risks marrying his "sister" and being condemned to a sterile union); the abandonment of traditional religious observances, especially the Biéri worship rendered to ancestors -- so that the Biéri "revenges" itself, "according to certain informants, by making the women sterile. Borrowing from European civilization and from their neighbors has altered "Fang manners" and resulted in behavior that is not valid for the Fang and puts their social existence in danger. These are the principal reasons brought forth. We have already in this chapter paid particular attention to these facts, because they show the subjective aspect of the demographic crisis and how much the search for fertility and for power, both linked together, still plays a part in the present reactions of this people, how it takes effect in an ambiguous manner by having recourse at the same time to modern foreign methods and to traditional Fang methods. For the Fang villagers the crisis is the most serious consequence of a situation created by colonization -- by "civilization," as some of them curiously say. This is sufficient indication that these facts must be integrated in the whole we have undertaken to analyze.

[101] III. The Type of Social Structure (1)

1. A study carried out with the help of documents collected especially among the Fang of the Woleu-N'Tem, and principally in Oyem region where Fang vitality is the most authentic.

Tribes, Clans, and Lineages

The recent clan renewal to which we have often referred has shown the still fundamental importance of the groupings established as a function of "kinship." This was immediately grasped by the first observers and administrators of the Fang country, who insisted on the "family" nature of the Pahouin groupings and came to the

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> the saying: "If the woman is the receptacle in which all can quench their thirst, she should not be carried off."

between these collective sanctions, and the very broad morality which allows a girl to "celebrate her youth" and which appears in the proverb: "Woman is an ear of dry corn in which anyone with teeth may bite." Marriage strengthens the socialization of woman, imposing on her [122] unconditional submission. One might say, to quote R. Bastide, that it consists in passing from "lustful sexuality" to "social sexuality."

581
585

The social character of marriage is emphasized symbolically. A series of ceremonies mark the admission of the woman into the group that is receiving her. The mother of her husband recites the latter's genealogy, and a segregation of a week is imposed on her, after which she undergoes a coming-out ritual -- she is bathed and anointed with oil by the oldest woman relative -- [55] and she receives a new name, indicating a wish, which the other women give to her at a time of song and dance. (1) The "alliance"

> 1. Cf. E. Trezenem, op. cit., p. 89.

concluded between the two family groupings is demonstrated by meals taken together and by rejoicing (éyalö), and above all, it is [769] consecrated by the sacrifice of an animal destined for the bièri (ancestors' altar) of the young girl's parents, showing that bonds exist not only with the group of living but also with the community of ancestors. (2) The emphasis is thus laid on taking possession of

> 2. No doubt it is necessary to link this sacred character of the alliance to the violence of collective reactions provoked by "women affairs."

the posterity (in this respect the recitation of the genealogy appears to be very significant) and on the creation of an alliance (the same

554 622 769 It should be noted, however, that pre-eminence "based on filiation," as Cureau puts it, is maintained without too much difficulty -- being durable while power born of events is temporary -- so long as the worship of ancestors by each clan fragment remains in force. Seniority determines this pre-eminence, justified and made effective by the possession of the basket containing the ancestors' skulls. This power of the "eldest," who is at the same time "first among his equals" and priest of the bîdzi cult organized within the cadre of "kinship," has not however allowed the implantation of effective chefferies comparable to those based on the same principles in the Ba-kongo country (2).

2. Cf., Third part of this work.

An early government report stressed the fact that one became chief, specifying that the nyamòrò (eldest) "became chief in his zone of influence when his fairness and the effectiveness of his power were recognized." (3) Thus neither the villages nor the

3. Customs regulating the attributes of chiefs and their designation in Rapport politique du Djoush [Political Report of Djoush], 1938.

localized clan fragments, nor still less the extended clan and the tribe, reveal the existence of a true hierarchy. We see the pre-eminence of the ésa (which may only be shown by some deferential attitudes) or the provisional pre-eminence of a man who has known how to expand his "zone of influence."

554 622 [71] What are the reasons for such a situation? Taking as an example Ba-kongo, which will be studied later, one sees that the fundamental social relationship is that which exists between the ancestors (masters and guardians of the sod), the land, and the lineage; it implies necessary relations between related lineages and limits the mobility of groupings. There is nothing like this in the Fang country, where the relation with land has no such importance and the whole economy, until very recently, remained oriented toward warlike and economic conquest. Even in the

692 or judicial. We have sufficiently stressed the diffuse character of the latter. On the other hand, certain "associations" show an organization (which is often effective outside the clan) that fills (or attempts to do so) a compensating function. This is true of the Ngil, whose role of pacification and justice extends beyond clan limits -- and in spite of these limits.

6. The Associations

769 We have frequently pointed out the rather loose nature of 774 the bonds which exist between even close fragments of a clan. In Gabon, because of the extreme dispersal and entanglement of the divers fragments, the "periodic gatherings" disappeared very early. No mention is made of them by early authors, except for a vague one by Father Trilles. However, these gatherings (ésulan) have been kept up in the Cameroons with the purpose of reminding the members of their solidarity and having them show it by "helping one another in kind, with money, and with days of work." (1)

1. Tradition des Yénlòk [Tradition of the Yénlòk], Archives of Ebolowa, The Cameroons.

These bonds, however, are found to be tightened at the time of the initiation of young men to the Bièri cult when the society of grown men is also strengthened. Bièri, while borrowed, according to H. Trilles, "in its form from neighboring nations" yet "remaining basically Fang," is a cult rendered to the spirits of the [774] ancestors through the agency of their skulls. It necessitates for every nd'è bòt an altar set up in the hut of the eldest, or very near it. [142] It requires sacrifices (regular and circumstantial), and it has to be consulted before every important action.

This cult confirms the continuity of the line and reveals periodically the profound unity which constitutes the continuation of the generations -- at the time of sacrifices of food, the food is first "consumed" by the Bièri, then eaten by the secluded initiates (mvoma bièri) assembled in the guardhouse. It imposes a large

number of prohibitions (with regard to the uninitiated and the women) and obligations. It "separates" the initiated men, thus giving a privileged position -- justified by the right to commune with the ancestors and to "see the Bîéri" -- to the most active elements of Fang society.

The initiation is particularly characterized (the culminating moment of the series of ceremonies) by drunkenness produced by the plant alan, (1) which may result in long-lasting unconsciousness.(2) The newly initiated man at this juncture becomes certain that he has enjoyed a revelation and from then on is in communication with the ancestors. He experiences the fervor of a communion that binds him to the whole society whose effectiveness he discovers at the same time: he has in fact become the object of predictions that are always realized. (3) He asserts himself, if we may use the expression, as a full-fledged Fang. The Bîéri cult assumes therefore the highest function of aggregation. We stress the fact that initiation is carried out in the same place for several of the nd'ê bôt belonging to the same clan, thus strengthening the ties of kinship existing between closely related clan fragments, and tending to reconstitute, to make real, units larger than the individual groupings. On the other hand, initiation to this cult, like circumcision (which takes place apart and appears to be a recent acquisition of the Fang), creates groupings of young men who belong appreciably to the same age group. It emphasizes a link between generations (the "fathers" or "eldest" being

1. Strychnos icaja.

2. E. Trezenem, op. cit., III, Le Bîéri, pp. 74-76.

3. Cf. idem., p. 75: "All the Pahouins whom we questioned assert that predictions made to people drunk on alan by the bîéri have always been realized.

G: Balandier--99 E-6 (1946-1951) 1955 FH9 Fang FH9

those who give the initiation), which is important in traditional Fang society.

The grouping that forms the Bitri – which brings together full-grown men who take an integral part in the social life – remains closely linked with the system of kinship. It has, none the less, an important role which we have just pointed out, that is, [143] it establishes relations, which are most effective because they are religious, between elements of the same clan who do not belong organically [sic] within the limits of a superior unit which might have been the chefferie. But other associations have come into existence beyond the clan kinship and beyond the diversity, peculiarities, and antagonisms it provokes. The Ngil, with a multifunctional activity and with an aim to putting things in order at the time of crises and conflicts, seems to be the best known. (1)

1. Cf. Father H. Trilles, op. cit., p. 62. Captain Maignan, op. cit. Lt. Poupard, "Le Fétichisme et la barbarie au Congo [Fetishism and Barbarism in the Congo]," Renseignements Coloniaux, March, 1908. Above all, L.C. Leroux, Etude sur le Ngil [Study on the Ngil], Bulletin de la Société des Recherches Congolaises, 6, 1925.

Members of the Ngil as such are guaranteed "in all places against attack"; they circulate "without the least fear of any outrage" among tribes that are in "open vendetta." (2) The Ngil –

2. L.C. Leroux, op. cit.

the word designates both the association and the masked man who operates in its name – "has the right to strike, wound, and even kill." The solemnity of his action is marked by the suspension of all life in the village when he arrives. The huts are closed, the fires put out, the women cloistered, and no inhabitant shows

himself in the interior courtyard. The final ceremony includes the erection of a hollow clay statue (3) (also called Ngil) before

3. Cf. the description in the articles of Leroux, op. cit., and Poupard, op. cit.

which "all the inhabitants of the village and those of the villages of the same line" must appear, and whose function is to reveal the guilty ones (who have caused unexplained deaths or calamities from which the whole group has suffered, etc.). The intervention of the Ngil is sought in moments of serious crises. It calls for total action involving large groupings for whom it has a real therapeutic value: by determining guilt (impossible to contest because it is a matter of a superior and anonymous justice), by reinstating unity (on a passionate basis) at the time of the punishment, by re-creating a new vigor by means of this "purification."

The religious aspect of the "association" justifies such an absolute, such an indisputable action. Unfortunately, we know little about it, except that certain dead are called upon by means of skulls, bones, and sacrifices, and that fertility rites are included when the Ngil has a female companion, Omore (1). [144]

1. H. Trilles, op. cit., p. 62, writes that "the new members must accomplish a number of actions connected with the act of generating before the statue of Omore ...," and Poupard speaks of "shameful ceremonies."

We have here a prevalent dialectic: a recourse to the social past -- which is a true reservoir of endlessly accumulated powers -- in order to instruct the social future and to fertilize it; the past and the future, the ancestors and the living are, like the generation of the ésa and that of the mwanõ, in the relation of begetter to begotten. This movement expresses dependence and a certain social order. The intervention of the Ngil -- but it is not the only

794 one – tends to re-establish this elementary order, it is a rein-
●769 statement, a pledge of fertility and power. Apparently the Ngil
[171] resembles a great many other "associations" that have existed in Gabon, especially the Mwiri of the Ngounié people. (2) It con-

2. Cf. A. Maclatchy, "Organisation sociale des populations de la region de Mimongo [Social Organization of the Peoples of the Mimongo Region]," Bulletin de l'Institut d'Etudes Centrafricaines, I, I, 1945.

stitutes primarily an instrument of struggle against the sorcerers (bôyêm), to the extent that they attempt to interfere with the normal order. But it is much more than that: it is the indication of a power superior to that based on kinship, a grouping with a great capacity for control (doubtless the most powerful).

794 The Fang have known other associations of men with spe-
[535] cialized functions – or rather those that create "specialism," such as the akûm, who directs the ceremonies linked with the male dance called makuma. The akûm, who appears also as a sort of chronicler-singer, intervenes especially at the time of
[547] funerals and affairs concerning fertility (search for the "sorcerer" responsible for an abortion that might result in permanent sterility.(3)

3. Cf. E. Trezenem, op. cit., p. 78.

ceremonial intended to lift the incest which creates sterile marriages). The akûm in daily life is distinguished from the non-initiates by being subject to a number of special interdicts. He is a "respected, or rather a feared, person," to him is attributed "great power." "In order to reach this situation he must have been
[535 taught by another akûm; he must have learned the interminable
674] songs that last a whole night long, and then with his own hand kill one of his close relatives...." (4) This brief description is

4. Father L. Martrou, "Les Éki

an old man, mâm mâ, who lived too long lost his prestige as he became decrepit. It seems probable that during the great migrations old people, particularly feeble old women, were abandoned in the forest when a village moved its site. Certainly death must often have come before the infirmities of age, from fighting, hunting, or the first serious illness. My informants were always unanimous in telling me that the skull of an infirm or senile old man could not be used in the bîéri cult.

With the second generation of descendants, a man, alive or dead, inevitably becomes évoam, a forefather, in the double sense of grandfather and ancestor.

An age grade covers about three years: this is about the longest possible stretch of time during which two children born on different dates can both be at the breast together, and it was approximately the interval separating two large collective initiation ceremonies. Classificatory kinship groups people by generation: all those of one generation are bobenyaŋ, brothers, as mentioned above. Within an age grade the term éjula, "comrade," is more apt to be used. The succession of age grades created an internal hierarchy within the generation and strengthened the clan and tribal ties between the bijula. This strengthening was even more marked between the bo'bewôô of the same time of initiation.

Modern life alters these ties, as much from the dying out or transformation of the initiations as from the loosening of ties in the extended family and also from the greater mobility of individuals and limited families. The little Fang boy born at Fort-Lamy, where his father is postal agent, scarcely feels himself to be the éjula of his clan monyaŋ born on the same day at Libreville. Economic and political development tends more and more to set up hierarchies founded more on occupation, wealth, even education, rather than on age and rank in the family. /58/

4. Slavery, Castes, Classes, Chiefdoms

Largeau spoke of the Pahouin as of a "people who have no synonym for our words 'king,' 'master,' 'servant,' 'workman,' 'slave.'" It is a fine phrase, but it only partially corresponds to reality. Largeau himself, in his encyclopedia, translates the word "slave" as nsagha, a loan word from Gabonese (Mpongwé), he says. Further north, people

[576] preceded by drummers and trumpet players and by a boy (uncircumcised?) entrusted with holding across the village street a liana, which the cortege broke through only after sacrificing a chicken. The uninitiated did not have the right to be present at this procession. The [704] ngil leader, masked and painted in red and white, carried his per- [536] sonal bieri (bieri). He was always accompanied by a full orchestra (mvet guitar, mbaf and nkul drums, mvet balafo). The initiation ceremony lasted a month (1).

[307] 1. The ngil mark was a tattoo below the sacrum, therefore covered by the loincloth. Initiates did not go out except in masks, so that theoretically it was impossible to recognize them.

Members of the ngil circulated in small groups, masked, to carry [753] out inquiries in villages where a case of sorcery was suspected or to put sorcerers to death. For ordinary cases they applied the ordeals in current use (minkal), but for serious cases it was necessary to arrange for an initiation ceremony: this feature is found in nearly all ritual associations, where initiation is always accompanied by collective catharsis.

[309] Among other masculine initiation societies the ndôngô rite must be mentioned, whose initiates have two incisions on the nape of the neck. Its symbolic /features/ include confession, purification, seclusion in darkness, passage through a narrow corridor or a low doorway, a liana-serpent, a consecrated lance, a sacrifice (2), a

[712] [769] 2. Dogs were sacrificed. Ndôngô canceled serious minsem /breaking a taboo/ like homicide or incest and allowed initiates to eat pork, mutton, and porcupine. (J.B.)

[825] horrible brew. The ritual animal was the tortoise. The purpose of this rite seems also to have been protection against sorcerers and, perhaps, to improve luck, ma'a. The initiation of circumcised youths, bekunga, is perhaps a juvenile form of ndôngô. Both survived until the Second World War. Ndôngô does not seem to set up

6:Alexandre and Binet--86 G-5 (1946-1954) 1958 Fl09 Peng Fl19

have his wife initiated so as to ward off bad luck. This is not the only example of the indirect intervention of one sex in a rite of the opposite sex. Alléget points out that it is a "woman who has had bad luck fishing" who "finds the ironwood for making the war fetish." It certainly seems that he has mixed up ngil with Ø, but the example remains valuable. Therefore, though traditional rites and the associations of initiates of these rites were strictly masculine or feminine, this does not altogether exclude the intervention of the opposite sex. No more can be said in our present state of knowledge (2).

2. The other important women's rite, ngôndé, was more especially limited to old women. The participants built a sort of basin out of four banana trunks and their leaves, in which a vegetable bîdî /medicament/ was prepared that gave protection against theft. (J.B.)

Contemporary cults and associations, on the other hand, are open to both sexes, whether religious or politico-religious societies or mutual-aid associations.

The two principal politico-religious associations are the bwiti (or mbuti) and the ngil, well described by Balandier (no. 175). They have spread to the north from Gabon and the Middle Congo and are not of Pahouin origin. They are beginning to penetrate Boulou country, where they have not been as successful as among the Fang of the south, undoubtedly because of the lesser degree of social destruction.

Bwiti was originally a "iyogo" ancestor cult, comparable to the Pahouin bîdî, if one accepts Trilles. It must have first appeared among the Pahouin at the beginning of the century, probably among Pahouin families cut off from their clans and thus from the bîdî and ngî rites, whose significance is primarily ethnic and familial. Libreville was an important point of contact, not only between African peoples of different stock, but also with European religious systems. Modern bwiti borrows a great deal from Christianity and also from freemasonry, which was fairly widespread in Gabon before the war, especially in half-caste circles and on the periphery of principal towns. In assuming this syncretist character, bwiti appears at the same time as a nationalist—or Africanist—movement and as a progressive movement abandoning the old cults or rather modernizing them. It is the

community. After another sacrifice, the bevôn were again confined inside the ésam sô, where initiates had dug a narrow passage and covered it with wattling and earth, the bottom strewn with thorns, crushed pimento, and warrior ants. The bevôn would receive final instructions, then, after taking mud baths, grunting like hogs, they had to crawl through the passage previously filled with smoke, while the minkpwangôs struck and pricked them with assagais through the cover; a mvôn who rose up or tried to escape was immediately killed by prisoners stationed outside the enclosure. This was the third stage, the true "death of the sô," awu sô.

After leaving the esam, the bevôn were supposed to be aggressive, teasing, to worry the other villagers, steal food, fowls, etc., tear down barriers, and in general behave like wild beasts. This period lasted for several days, preceding the sortie of the sô, akui sô, a parade of the group in war dress, carrying spears engraved with the distinctive clan mark, ndem, which had been consecrated during the initiation. A feast followed. For six months (mbu) afterward, the new initiates were still subject to certain sexual and food prohibitions, from which they were freed if they killed a man during the period. At the end /100/ of this waiting time, they went away, painted white, into seclusion for a night and came back painted red, making the rounds of the village nine times in procession. Then they bathed in a stream where fishing was afterward forbidden until the initiation of the next group, apparently.

A young man thus initiated became a mone wôsô, child of the death of the sô (wu = to die; wôé = to kill), thereafter ready for marriage, which would make him a complete man, nya mbôtô. His father might instruct him in the family cult, which till then he knew only in its externals; he was taught to identify the ancestral skulls kept in the bieti basket and to enter into communication with them by means of the narcotic herb alan. Sometimes the instruction was given collectively in the melan rite, which, according to Stoll, complemented sô, the latter being androgynous, while the former was gynandrous. Sô was to give creative power, melan fecundity and wealth. Melan has a medical aspect lacking in sô; the participation of women is greater. Some elements seem to have survived until the present day, whereas the last sô ceremonies must have occurred about 1940. Stoll gives a pretty full description in La tonétique des langues bantu ... du Cameroun /The Tonal System of the Bantu Languages ... of the Cameroons/ (no. 84).

GL 774 the shadow or immaterial duplicate of the body. The heart and lungs, niem, are the seat of the intellect and sensibility, especially of the consciousness of good and evil, the seat of the moral and mental personality. It is by way of the niem that a person's mind is struck, that, for instance, he is made mad, through their évur the beyem do di niem, eat the niem, of their victims. The niem for a time survives death; the nisim seems to be immortal. Breath, avebe (from vebe, to breathe, derived from vee • to be alive, alert) is characteristic of physiological life (1).

> 1. Among the Ewondo, the breath, ewundu (Boulou, evunulu • wind) is characteristic of the human being, as is nisim; animals are not provided with either, that is why they can be eaten. (J.B.)

Strength, tye, tyi, kie, or ki, is somehow external to the individual, independent of him, yet that which insures the cohesion of the elements of the personality. It seems to be particularly localized in the niem (thoracic organs) and the boo, brain, which is evidently the seat of action (the verb bo • to do, to act), whence the importance 769 of skulls in the ancestral cult, bieti. Ngui, which may also be translated "strength," is more "capacity" or "power," the faculty of making use of tyi. It is impersonal, it pre-exists and survives the individual, who during his lifetime can waste or augment it; it is the basis for magic and sorcery, tyi being in itself neither good nor bad. Everything that exists possesses tyi, including the dead, but living beings possess more than inanimate beings, and men more than other living beings. Sacrifices and prohibitions revalue around this notion, as vocabulary well shows: évyi = prohibition, metyi • blood, atyi = egg, tyik • to cut, to kill, to command, etc., (cf. above p. 25). The dead keep a certain amount of strength, which makes them at the same time potentially dangerous and potentially usable.

551 A name, jôé, jui, also pre-exists and survives the person it distinguishes, whence the special ties between bemôé /105/, homonymns, and also the need to know a person's name in order to cast a spell upon him, etc. A dead man keeps his name until it is given to one

b. Ancestor Cult, Totem, Spirits

769 We have seen that practically no worship was offered to the creator Mebe'e, only to Zambe (Nzame), the first ancestor, who was invoked as the father of all. But resort to Zambe was rather exceptional; people first asked for help, meya'ale, or protection, akam, from the nearest ancestors, bimvam.

The most characteristic form of the ancestor cult was the biéri (biéti), particularly well developed among the southernmost tribes and especially among the true Fang. Its priest was the living ancestor, the father, esa, and it had an acting hierarchy corresponding to the 769 different levels of the social structure and the clan organization, a 770 hierarchy of a religious rather than political character, as the authority which was derived from it being primarily /one of/ reverence. The main cult equipment consisted of the skulls of male ancestors, which the father, the senior, guarded in a basket, évora biéri (éwolé biéti), a kind of ark which the family group carried with it during its migrations. It was a fig-bark cylindrical box, decorated with beads and clan emblems (mindem); on the cover was a statuette of the first ancestor. The évora biéri was kept on a sort of altar (the view of which was étyi to women and the uninitiated) placed either in the hut of the head of the family or in a special hut. The évora was transported in a case of delicate basketwork, guarded by armed initiates. The skulls were painted with baa and sometimes decorated with copper or bead inlay.

769 When a younger son established a new village, the founder's skull was the first to be placed in the ark; the village he had left kept the skulls of the preceding ancestors of the lineage. Hence it may be imagined that the custodian of the lineage skulls had a certain amount of authority, delegated by the ancestors of higher rank, over the heads of splinter families, while he himself was somehow /111/ subordinate to the custodian of the ancestral skulls common to the segment, and so, one after the other ascending and descending the genealogical trees, from Zambe, departed and yet alive, to the living émvam of the last generation.

When a family split up without a quarrel, the senior, ntôl, of the new group received from his ésa, in place of the skulls which were supposed to stay with the original segment, a statuette containing fragments of ancestral bones, phalanges, teeth, or cranial bones.

769 The figure was placed on the new group's first family altar, and so afterwards were the skulls of the founder and of the benya bôtô of succeeding generations. A full biéri basket was the sign of a group's
554 antiquity, which doubtless implied prestige more than genuine authority, yet nevertheless represented the nearest approach to political authority that existed in the Fang group, particularly if one takes into account the fact that officials of interclan associations were chosen from among the owners of many skulls, whence prestige extended to a large number of mvôk or meyom. The prestige of the living was exerted through the authority of the dead.

826 Skulls were, indeed, the seat or receptacle of the individual's capacity for action (we must remember that bo = to make, boo = brain), and the use of skulls in the practice of magic was not confined to ancestral skulls only: the skulls of enemies killed in battle or sacrificed in anthropophagous ceremonies before or afterward were preserved, and so were those stolen from neighbors. In the same way the skulls of the kinds of animals desired were used for hunting rites. However, it seems that a distinction was made between family skulls and outsiders' skulls, only the first having a place in the éwolé biéti and
782 appearing in family rites. The power of the skulls was increased by sprinkling them with sacrificial blood.

769 When a youth reached nya mbôtô age he had to learn to recognize
869 his ancestors so as to be able to ask for their help when the occasion
881 arose. Their skulls were shown to him until he could identify them individually and put them in the correct genealogical order. When
276 he was able to do this, he was given a brew of the narcotic herb alan, then spent a night in the biéti hut, facing the skulls, which had been removed from the éwolé and placed on the altar on which strongly scented plants were burned. During the night the ancestors appeared and gave him a cognomen and imposed one or more new taboos (at the same time he was relieved of certain prohibitions connected with age). Apparently it was during this initiation that his individual totem was revealed (if it was indeed a totem).

769 This question of the totem is very poorly elucidated, in spite of
614 some 600 pages devoted to the subject by Father Trilles. He dis-
114 tinguishes between clan, segment, individual, family, and society totems, etc. He also distinguishes a tutelary being, mvame, from the "effect of a tutelary being"; akam, an animal totem, from a dedicated animal or an incarnation of a man in an animal, etc. He

769 also discriminates between the ésayoñ, ancestor cult /112/, and the
614 mvamayoñ, totemic cult. It must be admitted that there is now no
114 chance of obtaining a cross-checking of his theories except on points of detail, although that is no formal condemnation of his theories; it is the consequence of a shortage of researchers, lack of respect on the part of the researchers, or loss of traditions of initiation. The following points may be considered as established:

mvam (émvam) connotes ideas of a forefather, dead or alive, lineal and protective.

[784] akam, protection, is sometimes used in speaking of animals, to indicate the reason for a prohibition; the verb kam having a defending-protecting meaning as well as that of forbidding-prohibiting.

All prohibitions are not tied up with these notions, but some are and they may well be individual prohibitions as well as hereditary collective ones, not necessarily involving animals.

Clan markings, mindem, and tattoo marks, mindan, are often connected with a prohibition.

825 There is a whole system of animal symbolism, evident particularly
[787] in tales and augury ("zoomancy," divination by spiders).

Certain animals are connected with initiation cults: very definitely the sô and snakes (dendraspis and python); probably the porcupine and tortoise (with feminine rites); perhaps the gorilla (njil; ngil, Johnson's tone 4, the ngil rite having tone 5).

[557] There does not appear to be any connection between an animal name borne by a person (Mvômô = Python, Zo'o = Elephant, Ze = Panther, etc.) and the prohibitions he is subject to.

614 Moreover, the following, it seems pretty certain, are not specifi-
825 cally related to totemism:

Alliance, élat or ngbwa, between a person and a particular animal.

A sorcerer's employing an animal, nkuk (observe that nkuk also means "mask") to carry out his sorcery at a distance.

[775] The incarnation of a sorcerer in the body of an animal, élañela (Trilles applies this name to the nkuk).

The temporary incarnation of a dead man in an animal's body.

The first three phenomena often seem to be confused in the minds of present-day Pahouin, and the fourth may be the consequence of this.

773 It is curious that the legend recounted by Trilles about the crocodile, which he considers to be the "national totem," represents

773 the animal pursuing the ancestors of the Fang in order to devour them, while the legendary history of migration collected in the north shows, on the contrary, the crocodile enabling the tribe to cross the Osoé Nnanga (the python performs this service for the Beti).

776 The observation made by the authors quoted on the "unsuperstitious" character of the Pahouin and of the slight development /113/ of "fetishism" among them is to be related to the almost total absence in their mythology of beings intermediary between God and man, genii or demigods.

771 625 Aside from the bivur, to be discussed in connection with sorcery, there are only the bingungur (Fang)(Boulou, bingôngôt) shown in some legends as kinds of ogres or ghouls haunting forests and attacking travelers. According to another interpretation, these rather are evil animals endowed with intelligence and malevolence beyond that of normal members of their species, perhaps animal sorcerers. The inoffensive aardvark, mvômesila, is thus very much feared; also a sort of very rare Pithecanthropus (Fang, éngure; Boulou, éngu'u) and a mermaid, the mammywôta of the coast, no doubt a lamantin /or manatee/. For Trilles, the éngungure is a "spirit, often transformed into an animal, which sorcers obey"; may there not be a confusion here with the évur (Boulou, évu)?

775 769 As for ghosts, bekôn, it might be said that there are good ones but no nice ones. One may usually get on with the kôn of a properly buried forebear who was respected in his lifetime and even obtain useful services from him, formerly paid for by sacrifices and libations to his skull and often today by candles, Masses, or prayers (I have known Protestants to go to Catholic missionaries for exorcism). There is more difficulty /in dealing/ with the kôn of a sorcerer or with that of a stranger neither whose name nor whose skull is in one's possession.

772 777

266 Lawful /non-criminelle/ anthropophagy probably had for an end, among others, that of acquiring power over the bekôn of enemies and perhaps of assimilating the rights they derived from their ancestors. This wartime cannibalism appears to have existed especially on the geographical fringes of the group and particularly along the invasion front, among the Fang proper, the vanguard of the migration. A relative or affinal kin was never eaten, only strangers, and these only by warriors (or sometimes by sons of warriors killed by the enemy). It is worth noting that for the cannibalism of the Fang and Osyéba only the "Gabonese" felt the terror described by all explorers. The

779 [Two paragraphs omitted. --Translator] [402]

791 Sometimes in very important tribes, especially in those that make up large, compact groups, this role of minister to the mvamayôn has developed temporarily upon the practitioner.

Sometimes practitioners take on the role themselves and hold it by their personal importance or ability.

In both cases a kind of usurpation is always involved or a mixing up of powers, rarely a substitution. The practitioner then acts not in his own name by virtue of his role and his own authority, but as a delegated power. ...

[One paragraph omitted. --Translator] [403]

[Two paragraphs omitted. --Translator]

779 791 694 769 Thus in certain specific cases the political chief of the clan leaves the exercise of religious worship to the practitioner even with regard to the totem. Yet this is only a delegated role to the extent that when the totem has to be questioned in a critical situation, the practitioner disappears and the chief resumes his rights; it would then be up to him to carry out ritual acts and make sacrifices. A chief may not be able to do this, [404] for instance, if he were very ill. A sacrifice is then offered to the totem directly concerned. Does the practitioner now come to the fore? Not at all. He first sacrifices to the tutelary spirits and spirits of the dead, and then he interrogates the spirits in order to find out what evil influences have caused the illness and to discover the person who, in the sacred phrase, has "made a fetish" against the sick man. The consanguineous heir appears in his turn to invoke the family's guardian spirits in favor of the sick man and to invoke his totem. In this case, invocations and sacrifice have a dual purpose: first, to invoke the direct ancestors represented by their skulls preserved in the biĕri box -- this is the cult of the esayôn; secondly, to invoke the totem represented by a real or symbolic fragment -- this is the cult of the mvamayôn.

[Four paragraphs omitted. --Translator] [405]

791 757 There are two distinct characters: practitioner [feticheur] and sorcerer.

The practitioner takes several forms: he may be soothsayer, physician, priest -- all different manifestations of the same ministry and all legal. In a word, the practitioner is the agent of the acknowledged cult.

575 769 We are dealing here with a recognized though secret cult, an accepted cult, addressed to spirits and -- of especial importance -- to the spirits of ancestors. On this subject the practitioner is entirely in agreement with the chief and the tribal traditions.

154 575 But in addition to natural magic to which the practitioners are confined, so to speak, "there is another," says Mgr. Le Roy, (1) [437] "which claims to borrow its power and methods

1. La Religion des Primitifs [The Religion of Primitive Peoples], p. 340, "La Magie [Magic]."

from beings of the invisible world, from the disembodied ancestral spirits of men and even of animals, from independent spirits ....

"This anti-Religion has, like Religion, its worship, incantations, evocations, rites, fetishes, offerings, sacrifices, ministers, feast days, places of assembly."

First of all, it has its ministers, who are none other than the sorcerers. For this reason in the preceding pages [cf. Chap. 12--Translator] I have already tried to give a sketch of the sorcerer and to make a clear distinction between him and the practitioner by, describing the main traits of his personality, by sorting out a complicated whole in which many points meet and many lines cross and interpenetrate.

[Three paragraphs omitted. --Translator]

Leaving out everything not directly bearing on the subject under discussion, let us examine only the following points, which will show both the great similarities and considerable differences that, from the totemic point of view, exist between these two orders of phenomena.

1. Like the practitioners ... [438] sorcerers have united in secret societies for the purpose of assuring their vitality and power.

2. The feast days and initiation ceremonies have numerous points of resemblance. However, those of the sorcerers' cult exhibit a much more marked character of horror, cruelty, and especially an extreme immorality, and a hideous obscenity, dominated by a perverted cult of blood descent and procreation.

770 771 In totemic worship, on the other hand, which is not religion but a collection of religious phenomena, this role belongs to the family or tribal head and if, in an exceptional case, it is performed by the practitioner, he does so as a delegate only.

779 769 The cult of the mvamayôn is in fact a derived cult, primarily based upon the esayôn cult without which it would have no raison d'être. Indeed, the esayôn is the true father of the tribe and without the esayôn there could be no mvamayôn; one evidently cannot exist without the other. But the esayôn, or ancestral worship, is independent of what is strictly a religious cult or recognition of the divine being and worship of spirits. The esayôn cult is connected with religion per se in the sense of drawing upon it as a source and, according to the Fan, of deriving from it its ultimate origin and fundamental rationale. The esayôn cult is therefore primarily and in principle a family cult, if one takes each tribal ancestor separately. It is national if the first ancestor or ancestors of the tribe are viewed together. The cult, then, is definitely connected with the genuine religious cult of deities, [500] in the sense that in many Bantu tribes, and probably among the Fan, the first ancestor or ancestors of the tribe are now deified and raised to the rank of national gods, or at least, spiritual protectors of the tribe.

779 [771] Totemism therefore has only relative importance as a basis for Fan religious conceptions and takes, one might say, only third place, after the leading cult of spirits and then after ancestor worship, of which it is but a derivative.

Totemic rites will, as I have said, be general or particular according to whether they are connected with the mvamayôn or the étotore. The first rites relate to the race itself and what bears upon its continuance and preservation, the others relate to the individual, not as a particular person but as a member of the race. From this we come quite naturally to recognizing among them those of the family and those of society, with religion entering to a greater or lesser extent into the second.

VI. The Establishment of a New Village

361 621 166 787 Various circumstances may lead to the setting-up of a new village. Worked-out land, denuded hunting anf fishing grounds, decaying huts, a disease decimating the children, the chief's death, a defeat in war, sometimes merely the wish to push on, are the principal reasons.

The spirits are consulted before departure is considered. [Footnote omitted.] There is a triple sacrifice; to the spiritual guardians of the village, to the ancestors, and to the totem. If the three replies are favorable, plans may go ahead. Otherwise, a sacrifice producing an ill-omened interpretation will be undertaken again, after a few days, until a favorable result is obtained.

361 621 After this first test a suitable location is sought. As this choice is made by delegates, the practitioner is called upon and he, with all the male inhabitants, combs the [557] surroundings of the new village, singing and dancing so as to drive away malignant spirits or any that might be injurious to the new establishment.

361 621 769 782 All the men then come together in the middle of what will be the future village, and the chief picks out the spot where he will build his own hut. A sacrifice is offered there, first to the totem and then to the spirits of the ancestors. To do this a roof of leaves is hastily erected and roughly placed on a few stakes. The évora biéri is carried underneath the roof and the chief puts in front of the unopened box a black hen and a kid.

Before slaughtering the two victims, the chief removes the akaméyôn from his baldrick and blows three times in the oviara, turning in three different directions. The objective of this ceremony is to dispel evil spirits. He then drags the akaméyôn behind him over the entire site of the new village. After one round he does another, holding the akaméyôn in his hand. Thus malignant spirits of earth and air will be dispersed. The akaméyon is then put on the évora biéri. The chief slaughters the hen by cutting off its head, grasps it by the feet, and sprinkles the akaméyôn and box. He again traverses the village, sprinkling

361 the sites of future huts with blood. The hen is then opened up
621 and divided among the principal warriors and the chief's relatives.
769 This strictly, speaking, constitutes the totemic sacrifice. The
782 kid or sheep is then offered to the spirits of departed souls and to the ancestors.

After the sacrifice to ancestors the chief puts the akaméyôn
361 back at his side. From the mfex or pouch, which is never re-
621 moved, he draws forth a small bundle of dirty material wrapped
769 around a bit of red wood, ashes, and a few bones. All this
778 comes from a sacrifice to the totem like that already described. To these he adds the remnants of the recent sacrifice and buries
[824] it all deep in a hole in which he drives a strong stake of élun or éfirfira wood; sometimes a young ebony tree is also used.
[822 At the top of the stake he fixes a ball of paste made of red wood,
842] white chalk -- the colors of sacrifices and spirits, and manioc, the symbol of fertility. A part of the clan or tribal totem is also inserted. The practitioner, with many gestures, songs, and dances imprisons within it all the evil spirits of the air.
[558]

The practitioner sows maize in the middle of the village, then plants a manioc root and particularly a euphorbia (euphorbia antiquorum), and puts a small fence around, so that the plants
[787] will not be desecrated. The village's prosperity depends upon their rapid growth. Should they wither, the chosen spot will be
[824] abandoned. Euphorbia has the power of averting thunder and evil spirits by means of its bristling points. Amaryllis and immortelles are often planted at the foot of the euphorbia, along with a few stalks of sugar cane. The amaryllis and immortelles ought to come from the old village, having issued from those which the chief's first wife had formerly brought from her
[842] native village at her marriage. Sugar cane is a symbol of fertility.

241 The women plant maize everywhere after these prelimi-
361 naries, and its rapid growth ensures basic subsistence. Meanwhile the men build the huts. The first ears of maize will certainly be offered to the guardian totem. Dried and preserved in the form of a coronet, they will provide seed for the following year.

8: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

name, the *Eki* of the Fang being the *Orunda* of the Mpongwe. One day when ou 784
a journey among the people, I asked an old headman to share with me a chicken 778
my boy had prepared for supper; the old man seemed pleased at my invitation, but asked the boy if it was a hen or cock fowl. Upon being informed that it was a cock, he declined to eat any of it: that was his *Eki*. As previously stated, I do 769
not believe the natives worship the spirits of Present and Future, but to a certain degree ancestral worship does exist. A Fang places the skull of his father in a curious receptacle of bark, worshipping it, killing fowls and making blood offerings to it, and in many ways the whole matter somewhat resembles the worshipping at graves and before ancestral tablets as practised in China. The natives often pray to their father's skull before talking a large war palaver, or the purchase of a new woman. As worshipping departed ancestors is the chief duty of a faithful Chinaman, so making offerings and prayers to the departed father's spirit before the skull constitutes the great Fang fetish, or *bieti*. Wooden idols, *biyeme*, of men [831]
and women are made in a manner which makes the sex extremely apparent; yet [532]
whenever I have seen these figures in towns, the people did not seem to regard them as obscene, but as truthful representations of the sexes. I feel sure that to some extent, at least, phallic worship is practised among the Fang. Spirits are 776
everywhere; in rocks, trees, forests, and streams; in fact, for the Fang, this life is one continual fight against spirits corporal and spiritual.

A peculiar belief regarding dreams is that when a person sleeps the soul often 787
wanders away, and its experiences on these journeys are made known to the sleeper 928
by dreams. After death the soul may inhabit any kind of animal. [775]

Fetish Biang (medicine).—Fetish means anything; leopard teeth, human finger nails, hair, wood, iron, herbs. The article used as *biang* or fetish, has no 778
intrinsic value, it is only valued because of connecting its owner with a spirit which can aid him. The leopard tooth fetish is supposed to impart the bravery of the leopard to its owner. Fetish is a spirit or combination of spirits manifested in material things.

Dili Mkuk.—To murder a person and save his skull as a fetish, or use the skull as medicine to bring women, guns, goats or goods. The people will make offerings to the skulls calling them by the names of persons killed. It is said that these prayers are always answered as desired.

Biang e Soli (hiding medicine).—A man goes and takes leaves of trees, and cuts 789
them up. He says, "I have cut up leaves of trees" (or high grass, bushes). The women shell gourd seeds and mash them. They catch a fowl, kill it, and put it in the pot. They also put in the pot the medicine leaves, and the mashed gourd kernels. They put the pot on the fire, and boil (its contents). When they have boiled it, the medicine is cooked. They take the medicine pot off (the fire). They go and put it by the side of (*afuâ*) the back of the *bieti*. The man who has put it there says to the *bieti*, other people want to kill me. He takes away the medicine pot. He opens the *bieti* basket. He takes a small piece of the bone (instead of this say to the woman and children he takes the excrement of the